

# THE CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE.

BY MEMBERS OF MENDON ASSOCIATION.

VOL. IV.

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No. 8.

## CONTENTS.

Sermon—from Acts. xxvi. 9	225	Party Spirit	241
A Colloquy on the Means of Re- generation	231	Anecdote of Hume	241
Mr. Balfour's opinion of the Devil —carried out	236	Aphorisms	242
Heroism of the Atheist	240	Review of Tracts published by the Am. Unitarian Association	242
Lover of Money	240	Review of Assistant to Family Religion	252

## CONDITIONS.

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CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE.

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SERMON.

ACTS, XXVI. 9. *I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.*

PAUL was by birth a Jew, by tradition a Pharisee, and by conversion a Christian. His conversion from Judaism to Christianity was a very great and sudden change, which excited great admiration. Neither the friends, nor enemies of Christ could easily believe, that the most bitter and powerful enemy of the Gospel, had become its sincere friend and defender. But Paul soon convinced the world, that he had become a warm and zealous friend of that cause, which he had violently opposed and endeavoured to destroy. His zeal in preaching the Gospel and spreading the religion of Christ, awakened the enmity and opposition of his former friends, who took the first opportunity of manifesting their resentment. As soon as he returned from his journey from Damascus, and openly appeared in Jerusalem, the Jews conspired to take away his life, and would have executed their purpose, had not the chief captain rescued him from their hands. This officer committed him to Felix,

and Felix committed him to Festus. While he was under the authority of Festus, he presented him to king Agrippa, who wished to hear what he could say in defence of himself and the new religion which he had embraced and propagated. In this defence, he related his views and feelings both before and after his conversion. And speaking of himself before he embraced the Gospel, he said, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth."

To set this passage in clear light, it is necessary to show,

I. That Paul had a wrong opinion of Christ, before he embraced the Gospel;

II. That he acted sincerely in opposing Christ;

III. That he was criminal in opposing Christ;

IV. To point out wherein his criminality consisted.

I. I am to show, that Paul had a wrong opinion of Christ, before his conversion. Paul was a Pharisee, and a great stickler for the peculiar sentiments of his own sect. He agreed with them in their notions of the Mosaic laws, rites, and ceremonies, and of the character of the promised Messiah, and of the predictions

concerning him. They had explained away the true meaning of the legal dispensation, and formed entirely false apprehensions concerning the types and predictions of Christ. So that when he came and dwelt among them, they had no idea of his being the long-expected Redeemer, but universally viewed and treated him as an impostor. This was the opinion of Gamaliel, the most learned teacher they had among them. He very candidly, but cautiously, delivered his opinion of Christ and his cause, before an ecclesiastical council at Jerusalem. "Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, and commanded to put the Apostles forth a little space; and said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves, what ye intend to do as touching these men. For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. And to him they agreed." Here Gamaliel compares Christ with other impostors, and supposes that he and his cause would eventually meet the same fate, with which they had already met. And in this opinion all the council con-

curred. This affords a strong presumptive evidence, that Paul, like the rest of his sect, viewed Christ as an impostor. And this evidence is corroborated by another circumstance, and that is, Paul was actually taught his religious sentiments, by this same Gamaliel; which circumstance he mentions, to convince the Jews, that he once entertained the same opinion of Christ that they did. "I am verily a man who am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous towards God, as ye are all this day." This puts it beyond a doubt, that Paul, like all the other Pharisees, considered Christ as an impostor, or, false prophet. Notwithstanding the doctrines which Christ preached, and the miracles which he wrought, and the declarations which he made, to prove that he was the true Messiah, who was to come and die and make atonement for the sins of the world; yet the Jews continued in unbelief, and considered him as a vile deceiver. They often said, "*He deceiveth the people.*" And this clearly appears to have been the opinion of the Apostle. He verily thought, that Christ was a deceiver, and his religion a delusion, which was subversive of the law and religion of Moses. He imbibed a false and groundless opinion of Christ. He viewed the Lord Jesus Christ as a vile impostor and false teacher, who propagated false and dangerous doctrines, which would prove fatal to all his followers. And in this opinion he was completely established. I proceed to show,

II. That he was, on this ground,



sincere in opposing Christ. He solemnly declared his sincerity before king Agrippa. "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Every man always thinks he is so far sincere, as he speaks and acts according to his real opinion. And so far as we believe, that any man speaks and acts according to his real opinion, just so far we always believe he is really sincere. If Paul verily thought, that Christ was an impostor, his conscience must have told him, that he ought to speak and act against him, and do all in his power to defeat his design and destroy his cause. This duty was expressly enjoined upon him in the 13th chapter of Deuteronomy. "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet or dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death, because he has spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt," &c. This divine injunction bound Paul as a Jew to oppose every impostor; and so long as he really thought that Christ was an impostor, his

conscience must have dictated, that it was his duty to oppose such a deceiver, and those who suffered themselves to be deceived by him. Hence his opposing Christ and his followers is a clear and conclusive evidence of his sincerity. He believed Christ to be an impostor, and he treated him as God required him to treat an impostor, which was the best evidence he could give, that he was really sincere in doing many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. But yet,

III. He was really criminal for all his opposition to Christ and his followers. Of this he was fully convinced, after his heart was renewed and united to Christ. Though he knew he was forgiven, yet he could never forget his criminality in opposing the divine Redeemer, and persecuting his sincere and inoffensive followers. He never could speak of this part of his conduct without self-condemnation and self-abasement. Referring to this subject he said, "And last of all he was seen of me also, as one born out of due time. For I am the least of all the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am." In another place speaking of himself he says, "Who was before a blasphemer, and persecutor, and injurious." And again he says, "Concerning zeal, persecuting the church." As soon as he was thoroughly convinced, that Christ was the true Messiah and Saviour of the world, and that his religion was truly divine; he was equally convinced, that all his past enmity and opposition to him, and to his friends, and to his cause,

was altogether criminal and inexcusable. His conscience condemned him for all the prejudice, selfishness, and malevolence, which he had felt and acted out, in opposing the Lord Jesus Christ and his kingdom in the world. He felt that his past sincerity did by no means excuse his blaspheming, persecuting, and injurious spirit. And his consciousness of guilt is an infallible evidence of his criminality in all he said and did against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. But if we could even suppose, that *he* was deceived in respect to his guilt, yet we could not suppose that Christ was deceived in respect to it, who knew his heart and expressly charged him with guilt for persecuting himself, when he was going to Damascus with a full purpose of persecuting his disciples. As he met and appeared to him on the way, he solemnly demanded, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Thus it is too plain to be denied, that Paul was verily guilty, notwithstanding his sincerity, in opposing Christ and his cause. But it still remains to be inquired,

IV. Wherein his criminality consisted.

Many have found a difficulty to reconcile Paul's criminality with his sincerity. If he verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, they have seemed to imagine, that his sincerity left no room for guilt. And though he acknowledges, that he did wrong in opposing Christ, they cannot easily discover wherein his criminality consisted. But if he was really guilty for doing what he did against Christ, it is to be presumed, that his criminality may be pointed out. Here then it may be observed,

1. That Paul was to be blamed for *forming* his false opinion of Christ. He was acquainted with the Old Testament, which contained not only various types of Christ, but plain predictions of the time, and place, and circumstances of his birth; of his design in coming into the world; of the miraculous works which he should perform; and of the sufferings he should endure, and of the death he should die on the cross. Many of these predictions he had an opportunity of seeing fulfilled. And by comparing these prophecies with his life and death, he might have proved to himself what he afterwards proved to others, that Jesus was the Christ. We are told, that when Ananias came to him, after his conversion, and put his hands upon him, "Immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, *that he is the Son of God*. But all that heard him were amazed, and said, "Is not this he that destroyed them who called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent that he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, *proving that this is very Christ*." All this evidence of Christ's being the Son of God, the promised Messiah, and Saviour of the world, Paul was to blame for not seeing before; for he might have seen it, and would have seen it, if his heart had been free from prejudice, partiality, and selfishness. If he had regarded God more than man, and the Scriptures more than tradition, he would never have thought Christ was

an impostor, but have been fully persuaded that he was the very Christ, the true Immanuel, who came to save his people from their sins. He was, therefore, without excuse for his first error in thinking that Christ was an impostor. While he dwelt at Jerusalem with Gamaliel, he had an opportunity, and it is likely he improved it, of seeing Christ, of hearing him preach, of beholding his miracles, and of attending his crucifixion. These things would have carried conviction, had he not resisted the light, and chosen to deceive himself. His ignorance and errors, under such circumstances, were totally inexcusable. He loved darkness rather than light, and error rather than truth. It was altogether owing to his evil heart of unbelief, that he formed a false and groundless opinion of Christ, notwithstanding that full blaze of light, which was exhibited before him. His self-deception was extremely criminal and inexcusable.

2. Paul was blamable for *persisting* in his wrong opinion of Christ. He had no right to form a false opinion of him at first; for he came at the time predicted, appeared in the circumstances foretold, performed the works assigned him, and finally suffered and died according to the Scriptures. But after all these things, the evidences of his being the Son of God and Saviour of the world continually increased. For God raised him from the dead; he appeared to many after his death, commissioned his Apostles to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; thousands in Jerusalem and other parts of Judea believed the Gospel which they preached and confirmed by miracles. And Paul himself heard Stephen prove

from the Old Testament, that Jesus was the Christ, and then saw him seal with his death the truth of the doctrine he had proved. If Paul never had before, he then ought to have given up his false opinion of Christ, and cordially embraced the Gospel. Indeed, there never was a time, after he formed his false opinion of Christ, in which he might not and ought not to have given it up. As he had no right to form a false opinion of Christ, so he had no right to persist in it. Sufficient light was continually shining around him, to convince him of his erroneous opinion. Some errors after they are formed are invincible, because there are no means left to discover them. But Paul's error concerning Christ was not of this kind. It was a voluntary error at first, and his persisting in it was voluntary. On this account, he was totally inexcusable for obstinately persisting in it in opposition to constantly increasing light. All the saints he saw, and especially all he persecuted, called upon him with a piercing and heart-affecting cry, to renounce his error, and believe the saving truths which they believed. They saw, believed, and professed the truth respecting Christ, at the risk of their lives, which was the highest testimony they could give in favour of the divinity of his person and the truth of his doctrines. Besides, there was nothing in the word of God, or divine providence, to counteract or weaken the evidence of Christ's being what he professed to be, the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world. His ignorance of Christ, therefore, was a voluntary ignorance, his error a voluntary error, and his sincerity in error was the fruit of the most

obstinate prejudice and unbelief. So that he was constantly increasing his guilt in verily thinking, and continuing to think, that the blessed Saviour was a vile impostor.

3. Though Paul verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth; yet he was extremely criminal for doing them from *selfish* and *malevolent* motives. It appears from his own account, as well as from the account of others, that he acted under the influence of malice and revenge in opposing Christ and his cause. The first account of him is, that "he consented to the death of Stephen, and kept the clothes of those who stoned him." After this, we are told, "that he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison." And the next account is, "that Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem." In these instances of his conduct, he manifested a most malignant spirit, which took pleasure in the torture and misery of the sincere and patient followers of Christ. But his own account of himself, while a persecutor, and acting agreeably to his misguided conscience, gives the most striking evidence of his malignant spirit, notwithstanding his professed sincerity. This account we have in the text and the following verses. "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which things I also did in Jeru-

salem; and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the high priest; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme: and being exceedingly *mad* against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." Now, though Paul verily thought that he ought to do all these things; yet he had no right to do them, from such a malevolent spirit. Men may do their duty in acting according to the dictates of a misguided conscience, if they act from truly benevolent motives: but they can never do their duty in acting agreeably to the dictates of even a well informed conscience, from selfish or malevolent motives. Though Paul's error had not been invincible, as it was not, yet this conduct would have been justifiable. But he was altogether criminal in obeying his misguided conscience, from a cruel, malevolent, persecuting spirit. *Conscience*, as well as the *divine law*, must be obeyed from a *pure and pious heart*, or there is no duty done, but sin committed. Men really sin, while they do those things which the divine law requires and conscience dictates, if they act from a selfish, wicked heart. Though Paul acted agreeably to the dictates of his conscience in opposing Christ and his cause, yet he was verily guilty for acting from corrupt and malevolent motives. And had Christ been, as he supposed, a real impostor, and his religion a delusion, still his malignant opposition to both him and his cause would have been absolutely sinful. So that his sincerity did by no means excuse the malignity of his heart.

[To be concluded.]



For the Christian Magazine.

A COLLOQUY ON THE MEANS OF REGENERATION. BY INVESTIGATOR AND SUPERFICIUS.

*Investigator.* Well, friend, as we have a little leisure, let us, if you please, resume the subject on which we began to converse the other day.

*Superficius.* You refer to the means of regeneration, I suppose?

*Inv.* I do, Sir; and the reason of my wishing to resume the subject is, that we may come at the truth, and endeavor to obtain clear and definite views in regard to it. There are few subjects, as it seems to me, on which it is of more importance to have such views; and yet few, on which the views of Christians generally, are more indefinite and divided.

*Sup.* It is important, no doubt, to understand the subject, but for my part I never had any difficulty about it. I think it plain enough that there are such means, and that of course they are to be used. We have evidence of it from Scripture, reason, and fact.

*Inv.* Very true; but let us be a little more definite. There are means by which regeneration is effected; that is, by which holiness is begun in the heart, and, also, means by which it is subsequently increased; now, will you have the goodness to specify *by* whom and *for* whom these means are to be used for these purposes.

*Sup.* Why, by all and for all, to be sure, who have them within their reach;—more especially, however, by ministers of the Gospel.

*Inv.* I hope you will pardon the obtuseness of my faculties; but I must say, I do not yet de-

finitely understand your meaning. I will be more explicit myself, and reduce my question to simple terms; for, perhaps, I have not made myself understood. As it respects those, in whose hearts holiness *already* exists, it is evident that *they* should use means to *increase* it both in *their own* and in *each other's* hearts; and it is also evident, that *they* should use means to *excite* holiness, in the hearts of those in whom it *does not* exist: that is, that *they* should use means to effect the regeneration of the unregenerate. But *are there any means which the UNREGENERATE are to use, in order to excite holiness in their own hearts?*

*Sup.* Most certainly. Do you suppose they are to fold their hands and do nothing? That they are to use no means whatever,—not even to attend meeting, read the Bible, and pray?

*Inv.* Certainly not. You mistake my meaning. I do not intimate that they are not to use means, for I believe it is their duty to do it, as much as it is the duty of Christians. But *how* and *for what* should they use them? Why, with the *same disposition* that Christians do, viz. a right, holy disposition. The Bible nowhere, as I can find, requires or *allows* any to use them with a *different* disposition; but it seems to require that every moral agent, sinners as well as saints, should use them with a holy disposition; and to intimate that God cannot accept them if used with any other. Hence, if they should use them with the *same disposition*, they should use them for the same *purpose*, that Christians do; and *not in order to the beginning of holiness in their hearts*. For this, as I conceive, would be absurd; because using means



with a right or holy disposition, implies that holiness is *already commenced* in the heart, *as soon as they begin* to use them. Hence, to say that a sinner must use means, *in order to begin to be holy*, is the same as saying in other words, that *with a holy disposition*, he must use means, *in order to the beginning* of a holy disposition. This, then, I suppose, cannot be your meaning in the answer you gave to my question?

*Sup.* You are always for carrying matters to extremes, and trying to make hair-splitting distinctions. For my part, I was never fond of that method of reasoning. But it is utterly impossible for me to see, according to your theory, how you would ever direct a sinner to begin to be holy, if not by using means?

*Inv.* I never would direct him *how*, for this would be going farther than the word of God. God requires that the sinner should exercise love to him—that he should repent, pray, &c. but he has no where told them *how* to go to work, if I may so speak, to exercise love, repentance, and a spirit of prayer.

*Sup.* What, then, is the use of means to the unregenerate?

*Inv.* God makes use of them in the hands of his children to bring them to repentance, and persuade them to exercise love; but he no where requires or *allows* the unregenerate to use means *with an unregenerate heart*, in order to begin to be holy; for this would imply that he allowed them to remain unregenerate, or at enmity with him, *while using* the means. Whereas he has made it a sinner's *first* and *immediate* duty, to love him, and to repent of his sins.

*Sup.* Then, impenitent sinners must not pray, or read the Bible,

or do any thing, before they love God and repent?

*Inv.* Certainly, they cannot be justified in doing any thing *while* their hearts are unreconciled to God; nor can —

*Sup.* Then they must wait and not try to do any thing till they love God?

*Inv.* No, brother, why do you ask if they must *wait*, when it is their *immediate* duty to be reconciled to God? Or, if you please, when it is their immediate duty to use the means of salvation, such as prayer, searching the Scriptures, attendance on preaching, &c.

*Sup.* But you are coming over to my side of the question, it seems, and begin to think they must use the means.

*Inv.* I have never said any thing against their using the means of salvation, with a right disposition; but have repeatedly said this was their duty. But I have opposed the absurd idea of their using means *with an unholy disposition*, in order to begin to be holy.

*Sup.* But how can they use the means of salvation with a holy disposition, when they have no such disposition?

*Inv.* I answer this, by asking a similar question, viz. how can they love God, when they have no love to him? The true answer is, they cannot, *while* they have no love to him; but is this a good reason for not loving him? And is the fact that sinners have not a holy disposition, a good reason why they should use means with an unholy one? No; certainly not, God does not think it so; but on the contrary, the very fact that they do not love him, and have not a holy disposition, is a reason why he commands them to love him, and to exercise such a disposition.

*Sup.* But, after all, a sinner will not use the means, at first, with such a disposition; may he not therefore use them as well as he can?

*Inv.* The fact that a sinner will not rightly use them is certainly no reason why he *ought* not, or why he should be justified or *allowed* in a wrong use of them, or why he should have it intimated to him that he *may* thus use them.—But what do you mean by “as well as he can?” Your language must imply that he cannot, that is, *is not disposed* to use them with a right disposition, and therefore, in using them, he may come as near *having* such a disposition as he *is* disposed, and no more! Now I believe you will shrink from such an idea, but it is certainly a correct inference from your language.

*Sup.* What, then, shall a sinner do? Your instructions would utterly discourage them from the use of means, and drive them to despair.

*Inv.* Well, brother, ought they not to be discouraged in such a case? Ought they not to despair of ever beginning to be holy, or of recommending themselves to God, and thinking they are in a fair way to be converted soon, by using means with a wicked disposition? Now, to urge a sinner to the use of means, with a humble, broken heart, telling him not to rest satisfied without it, instead of being a discouragement for him to use them, would, as I think, have quite a contrary effect. But, on the other hand, if any one should undertake to ease the matter a little with him, by giving him to understand that he might use them, with a wrong disposition rather than not at all, he would be more likely, by such intimations, to encourage

him to delay repentance and to live in sin; than in any other way.

*Sup.* But do not sinners often use them while unregenerate; and does not fact show, that by doing so, a good effect is often produced? And would not you have more hope that he would become a Christian, who did thus use them, than that he would who neglected to use them at all?

*Inv.* The fact that sinners often do use them while unregenerate, I admit. Perhaps this is universally the case with them previous to their conversion; and doubtless, it often has a good effect, in one sense of the word,—though I think its effect depends very much on the state of the sinner’s mind, who thus uses them. If he is unawakened, and unconvinced of sin, then his constant use of them may have a tendency to make him self-righteous, or to quiet his conscience in sin. But if he is convinced of sin, and deeply distressed on account of it, then, I think such attempts as he makes at prayer and other duties, has this effect, viz. to convince him more deeply of sin, of his lost and helpless condition, and his indispensable need of divine assistance. And I admit that in such a case, at least, I should have more hope of his becoming a Christian, than of one, who in a thoughtless state, made no use of means, at all. But I must add; though the use of means with an unregenerate heart, often actually produces such an effect on the mind of an awakened sinner, as I now speak of, yet I never would urge him to such a use of them, or intimate that he might so use them, for several reasons. 1. Because God has never done it; but on the

contrary has said such a use was not acceptable to him. 2. Because he has never given any warrant for any one to do it, but has said the *first* and *immediate* duty of every sinner is to repent of sin and exercise love to him. 3. Because there is no need of thus directing him. If his sinful state is set before him, and he is made to feel that repentance and love to God, are his undeniable, unavoidable, and immediate duty, there is no danger but he will make unregenerate attempts enough, at using means,—even more than he would if encouraged to make them. But 4. To tell, or even intimate to him that he is more likely to become regenerate, by such a use of means, than as though he wholly neglected them, or was careless and indifferent, would be hazardous in the extreme. For, in the first place, though it is more *likely*, yet it is not any more *certain* that he will, than as though he was indifferent and wholly neglected them. In the second place, he would be liable, from such intimations, to rest in such a use of means,—to take courage and hope in them, while he was unreconciled to God; and thus lose his fears and convictions and perhaps his soul. Besides, thirdly, I can conceive of no possible good that would result from thus directing him.

*Sup.* But would it not encourage him to keep using them, till he became holy?

*Inv.* It would indeed encourage him to keep using them for a while at least, but not till he had obtained grace, for no sinner ever did or ever will obtain grace, while continuing in such a use of them. What! because he is unwilling to use them, at present, with a humble, penitent

heart, shall he be told, that he may continue to use them with an unhumiliated, impenitent heart? And with the hope, too, that God will sooner or later, accept of and bestow grace in answer to them? Or that he will be more likely to accept of them than none at all? Besides, such directions would give him to understand, that it will be *easier* to use them with a right disposition, after a while, than now—or than it will to *begin* using them with a right one: which is not the case.

*Sup.* But did you not say, that for an awakened sinner at least, to use them with such a heart as he had, often produced a good effect?

*Inv.* Yes. Yet it is not *certain*, that such an effect, if produced, would lead him to submit his heart to God, for, often, such is not the case with sinners. But, to tell him that such will most likely be the effect of using them with a heart unreconciled to God, would, as I said before, not only do no good, but would rather be a sure way to prevent such an effect?

*Sup.* But, after all, is it not just as proper for a sinner to use the means of salvation with a wrong heart, as it is for him to eat, work, or provide for his family with such a heart? And do you hesitate to allow and to tell those whom you know to be unregenerate, to do these things?

*Inv.* As to propriety, there certainly is none in either case. How can there be a propriety in a man's doing any thing with a heart unreconciled to God? And to tell the unregenerate, to do these things, is what I do not hesitate to do; neither, you should remember, do I hesitate to tell them to use the means of salvation; but I would avoid inti-

mating to them that they may use them with any other than a right disposition. For an inspired writer says, the *plowing* of the wicked is sin, as well as his sacrifice an abomination. And another, that whether ye *eat*, or *drink*, or *whatever* ye do, *do all to the glory of God*. Now this is just what I would have them to understand, when I tell them to do *any* thing, though I do not always stop to inform them of it. And whether they do any thing with a right heart or not, is what I am not to see to, or account for.

*Sup.* But do you not teach your children to pray, and read the Bible, and do you not require them to attend family and public worship; while you know they have not holy hearts?

*Inv.* Certainly, certainly. You seem constantly to have the idea, that I would never tell a sinner to do any of these things. But I am as strenuous that they should do them, as you are. All I contend for is, that they should do them with no other than a right disposition. When I teach my children to pray, read the Bible, and attend family and public worship, I teach them to do it with humble, penitent hearts, and with a filial disposition; telling them that otherwise God will not be pleased with and accept them. This is as far as I can or ought to go. Whether or not they perform them with such hearts and dispositions, is what I must leave between them and God. But I dare not intimate to them that if they will not perform them thus, they may do it differently. Am not I correct?

*Sup.* Why, yes, I don't know but you are; but—is it not *less sinful*, to use them with a wrong heart, than not use them at all?

*Inv.* To this I say, 1. If it is, they may not be allowed to use them, with such a heart, any more than they may be allowed to commit a lesser sin, if they will not commit a greater. It is better, to be sure, or rather I will say it is not so bad, to commit the lesser as the greater; and if one *must* be done, it is more desirable, certainly, it should be the former. But 2, they ought not to do either, or have it intimated to them that they may, for this would imply that they might delay being reconciled to God. 3. It is not certain that it is less sinful. In some instances it may, and in some it may not be.

*Sup.* If what you have said on this subject is correct, and I am not certain but it is, it will follow that *all*, sinners as well as saints, must use the means of salvation with the *same disposition*, and hence for the *same purpose*, viz. of becoming more holy, and not beginning to be holy in heart. Is this your idea?

*Inv.* It is; so far as it respects *individuals separately considered*; for, to tell a person to use means with a right disposition, *in order to have a right disposition*, in his *own heart*, appears to me rather a strange idea. Though I have no objections, to his undertaking to do it, provided he will do it with a right disposition. But considering them collectively, it is certainly the duty of each one, with a right disposition to use all proper means to induce others to become holy immediately.

*Sup.* But it seems to me, that this last idea, viz. that it is the duty of every one, sinner as well as saint, so far as his influence extends, to use means *with a right disposition*, in order to excite right dispositions in *others*, is full as strange an idea as the other



you mentioned; for if *all* should do so, there would be no *others* with whom to use means, that is, if *all* should do their duty, there would be no opportunity to do it!

*Inv.* Well, Superficius, I must say you begin to be a little more acute and deep in your reasonings than usual. But you confound my meaning. There are *two* duties contained in my expression, the second depending on the first; but your reasoning seems to go on the supposition that there is but one. The first duty, which I mentioned as binding on all, was for each one to have a right disposition himself. The second, that each, so far as his influence extends, should endeavor to excite such a disposition in others, *provided*, there were any others in whom it did not already exist, that is, provided there were any who did not perform the first duty. But if *every one* should perform the first duty, the second, of course, could not be binding, that is, could not be a duty. But, brother, I must leave you; as I have just at this time an engagement. If you wish for further information on this subject, I must refer you to that excellent dissertation of Dr. Spring's, which is just published. I hope, however, that the little interview we have had may be profitable to each of us. We should ever be careful in treating this subject to avoid the extreme on the one hand, that a sinner is not to use means till *after* he loves God, and, on the other, that he may use them *before*. The middle course is doubtless the true one, viz. that *while* he uses them he must love him, and while he loves him, he must use them.

F. C. R.

For the Christian Magazine.

MR. BALFOUR'S OPINION OF THE  
DEVIL, CARRIED OUT.

*Messrs. Editors,*

As Mr. Balfour has been pleased to favor the world with several publications, in which he has attempted to display much talent and learning, he is doubtless willing that his assertions should be put to the test of *common sense*; especially as he pretends to make this a capital rule by which to try the sentiments of others. It must, also, be rather ungrateful not to take some notice of *his* works, as well as other current publications, seeing he has taken so much pains to show that the Scriptures are wrongly translated, and that there is no such thing as a real being called the Devil or Satan. I shall, therefore, with your leave, devote a few numbers to the reading of the Scriptures, according to Mr. B.'s translation in his second "Inquiry," in which he endeavors to teach the *true* "doctrine of devils," and from which we may doubtless derive much light and new instruction.

MATHETES.

THE first Devil, or Satan, which Mr. B. introduces, he calls by the name *lust*. After stating many things to show, as he supposes, what is represented by the *serpent*, in the third chapter of Genesis, he proceeds to say, p. 26, "I shall now state for candid consideration my own opinion on this subject." He then cites some of those passages in which the serpent is represented as deceiving Eve, and observes, "It will now be said, *allowing all this to be true, what was it that deceived Eve, and which Moses here represents by the subtilty of the serpent?*" I answer, *lust* or *desire* in Eve, for what is *lust* but *desire*?" p. 27. Now admitting this to be



true, and adapted to the account given by Moses, it will read in the following manner: 'Now the lust was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he (lust) said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the *lust* or *desire*, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the *lust* or *desire* said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened: and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be *desired*, or *lusted* for, or *serpented* to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.'—Verse 9. 'And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden; and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The *lust* or *desire* beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the *lust* or *desire*, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and

above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee (*lust* or *desire*) and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, (*lust* or *desire*) and thou (*lust* or *desire*) shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy *lust*, *desire* or *serpent* shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.'

The next passage, in which the term Satan occurs as a proper name, is, 1 Chron. xi. 1, "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel." On this passage, Mr. B. comes to the conclusion, p. 43, that the term Satan *may mean* "some evil desire or passion" in the mind of David, or "some human adversary;" "nor," says he, "would it be very strange that the anger of Jehovah was in this passage the Satan referred to." Though Mr. B. appears at a loss to determine who or what is meant by "Satan," in this passage, yet, after his laboured criticism, we may doubtless venture to read it thus: and 'some evil desire or passion in his own mind,' or 'some human adversary,' or 'the anger of Jehovah, stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.'

The next remarkable passage, where the term Satan is introduced as representing a real person or being, occurs in the first and second chapters of the book of Job. Here Mr. B. gives his own repeated assertions, that the book of Job was written to refute the heathenish notion of an evil being, called Ahraman, and

which he is pleased to call, "*the Christian's Devil*." He is under the necessity, however, of supposing, that the term Satan, used in the first and second chapters must allude to *something*, and chooses, therefore, pp. 57—58, that the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters should receive this appellation. In order to obtain the *true sense* of the passage, then, we may read it in the following manner: 'Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters came also among them. And the Lord said unto the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters, Whence comest *thou*? Then the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters, Hast *thou* considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth *thine* hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth *thine* hand. So the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters went forth from the presence of the Lord.'—'Again there was a day when the sons of God

came to present themselves before the Lord, and the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters came also among them to present *himself* before the Lord. And the Lord said unto the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters, from whence comest thou? And the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters answered the Lord and said, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters, Hast *thou* considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although *thou* movest me against him, to destroy him without cause. And the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters answered the Lord and said, skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth *thine* hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters, Behold he is in *thine* hand, but save his life. So went the Sabeian and Chaldean freebooters forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.'

The next passage, to which we may turn our attention, is Ps. cix. 4, "For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer." Now as the original of the term adversary, (though here in the plural,) is the same as that, which in the 6th verse is translated, or, as Mr. B. says, is left untranslated, *Satan*, Mr. B. concludes that they must both mean the same thing. Indeed, whoever will take the trouble to consult his "Inquiry,"

will find him to insist, that the terms *Satan* and *adversary* are synonymous. He also asserts, p. 62, respecting verse 6th, that "in the Jewish mode of parallelism, a wicked man in the first part of the verse, is the same as Satan in the second." But Mr. B. cannot deny, on his own ground, that the pronouns *he* and *him*, in this and some of the following verses, refer to adversary, or adversaries, previously mentioned. Now, if *adversary*, and *Satan*, and *wicked man*, are synonymous, we may safely read the whole in the following manner, without destroying or even injuring the sense: 'For my love they are my Satans: but I give myself unto prayer. And Satans have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love. Set thou a Satan over Satan; and let Satan stand at Satan's right hand. When Satan shall be judged, let Satan be condemned: and let Satan's prayer become sin. Let Satan's days be few; and let another take Satan's office. Let Satan's children be fatherless, and let Satan's wife be a widow. Let Satan's children be continually vagabonds and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places. Let the extortioner catch all that Satan hath; and let the stranger spoil Satan's labour. Let there be none to extend mercy unto Satan: neither let there be any to favour Satan's fatherless children. Let Satan's posterity be cut off; and in the generation following, let their name be blotted out. Let the iniquity of Satan's fathers be remembered with the Lord; and let not the sin of Satan's mother be blotted out. Let them be before the Lord continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth. Because that Satan remembered

not to show mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that Satan might even slay the broken in heart. As Satan loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as Satan delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him. As Satan clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into Satan's bowels like water, and like oil into his bones. Let it be unto Satan as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually. Let this be the reward of my Satans from the Lord, and of them that speak evil against my soul.' Verse 29th, 'Let my Satans be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion as with a mantle.'

The last passage in the Old Testament to which our attention is called, is, Zech. iii. 1, 2. Mr. B. says, p. 63, that Satan, mentioned in these verses, means Tatnai and Shethar-boznai, whose names are recorded in Ezra, chapters 5th and 6th. We may therefore, have the sense of the passage by reading it thus: 'And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Tatnai, and Shethar-boznai, standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Tatnai and Shethar-boznai, the Lord rebuke thee, O Tatnai and Shethar-boznai, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?' But, if *Satan* and *adversary* mean the same thing, as Mr. B. contends, and we admit the marginal reading, "to be an adversary unto him," we can read the passage in this manner: 'And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and adversary standing at

his right hand to be an adversary unto him. And the Lord said unto adversary, the Lord rebuke thee, O adversary,' &c. Again, because Satan and adversary are synonymous, we may read it thus: 'And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to be a Satan unto him.' Again, if Satan and adversary, in this passage, mean Tatnai and Shethar-boznai, we may give the passage another reading, which will doubtless throw still more light upon that "*old serpent, which is the devil and Satan.*" 'And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Tatnai and Shethar-boznai, standing at his right hand to be Tatnai and Shethar-boznai unto him.'

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*From Hall's Polemicks.*

#### HEROISM OF THE ATHEIST.

[Extract from a Review of Foster's Essays.]

IN tracing the steps by which some have arrived at the last stage of daring impiety, the denial of a God, Mr. Foster evinces in a masterly manner the presumption of the atheist, and places the extreme absurdity of pretending to demonstrate the non-existence of a Deity, in a light in which we do not remember to have seen it exhibited. Speaking of a pretended heroism attached to atheistic impiety, he adds,

"But, indeed, it is heroism no longer, if he *knows* that there is no God. The wonder then turns on the great process by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence that can know that there is no God. What ages, and what lights are requisite for THIS attainment? This intelligence involves the very attributes of di-

vinity, while a God is denied. For, unless this man is omnipresent, unless he is at this moment in every place in the universe, he cannot know but there may be in some place manifestations of a Deity by which even *he* would be overpowered. If he does not know absolutely every agent in the universe, the one that he does not know may be God. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not know what is so, that which is so may be God. If he is not in absolute possession of all the propositions that constitute universal truth, the one which he wants may be, that there is a God. If he cannot, with certainty, assign the cause of all that exists, that cause may be a God. If he does not know every thing that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are past, some things may have been done by a God. Thus, unless he knows all things, that is, precludes another Deity by being one himself, he cannot know that the Being whose existence he rejects does not exist. But he must *know* that he does not exist, else he deserves equal contempt and compassion for the temerity with which he firmly avows his rejection, and acts accordingly."

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#### LOVER OF MONEY.

MEDITATE on the final condition to which the lover of money is hastening. The *covetous*, the man who is under the dominion of the love of money, *shall not inherit the kingdom of God*. In the present life he has a foretaste of the fruits of his sin. He is restless, anxious, dissatisfied: at one time harrassed by uncertainty as to the probable result of his pro-



jects; at another, soured by the failure of them; at another, disappointed in the midst of success by discerning, too late, that the same exertions employed in some other line of advantage would have been more productive. But suppose him to have been, thro' life, as free from the effects of these sources of vexation as the most favorable picture could represent him. *He shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* He may not have been a miser; but he was a lover of money. He may not have been an extortioner; but he was a lover of money. He may not have been fraudulent; but he was a lover of money. *He shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* He has had his day and his object. He has sought, and he may have accumulated, earthly possessions. By their instrumentality he may have gratified many other appetites and desires. But he did not seek first the kingdom of God; therefore he shall not obtain it. *He loved the world; therefore he shall perish with the world.* He has wilfully bartered his soul for money. In vain is he now aghast at his former madness. In vain does he now detest the idol which he worshipped. The gate of salvation is closed against him. He inherits the bitterness of unavailing remorse, the horrors of eternal death.—*Gisborne's Sermons.*

PARTY SPIRIT.

DURING the present disjointed state of things, nothing remains, but for every one to whom the care of any part of the Church of Christ is intrusted, to exert himself to the utmost in the promotion of vital religion, in cementing the friendship of the good,

VOL. IV.

and repressing, with a firm and steady hand, the heats and eruptions of party spirit. He will find sufficient employment for his time and his talents, in inculcating the great truths of the Gospel, and endeavoring to 'form Christ' in his hearers, without blowing the flames of contention, or widening that breach which is already the disgrace and calamity of the Christian name. Were our efforts uniformly to take this direction, there would be an identity in the impression made by religious instruction; the distortion of party features would gradually disappear, and Christians would every where approach toward that ideal beauty spoken of by painters, which is combined of the finest lines and traits conspicuous in individual forms. Since they have all drank into the same spirit, it is manifest nothing is wanting, but a larger portion of that spirit, to lay the foundation of a solid, cordial union. It is to the immoderate attachment to secular interest, the love of power, and the want of reverence for truth, not to the obscurities of Revelation, we must impute the unhappy contentions among Christians—maladies, which nothing can correct, but deep and genuine piety. The true *schismatic* is not so properly the person who declines a compliance with what he judges to be wrong, though he may be mistaken in that judgment, as the man who sedulously employs every artifice to alienate the affections of good men from each other.—*Hall's Polemicks.*

ANECDOTE OF HUME.

David Hume observed, that all the devout persons he had ever



met with were melancholy. On this Bishop Horne remarked; this might very probably be; for in the first place, it is most likely that he saw very few, his friends and acquaintances being of another sort; and, secondly, the sight of him would make a devout man melancholy at any time.

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APHORISMS.

TRUE goodness is not without

that germ of greatness that can bear with patience the mistakes of the ignorant, and the censures of the malignant. The approbation of God is her "*exceeding great reward*," and she would not debase a thing so precious, by an association with the contaminating plaudits of men.

No man ever offended his own conscience but first or last it was avenged upon him for it.

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## Reviews.

For the Christian Magazine.

REVIEW OF TRACTS published by the American Unitarian Association.

[Continued from page 222.]

THE next writer with whom we have to do is Rev. Orville Dewey of New Bedford, in a Tract entitled "*The Unitarian's Answer*." Originally, we presume, this Tract was a Sermon, from 1 Pet. iii. 15. "*Be ready always to give an answer*," &c. It was "first published by the New Bedford Book and Tract Association," and has now passed to its "third edition." The object of it is to exhibit the reasons, why Unitarians prefer their own system of religion to all others. "These reasons," says the author, are the two following, viz. "the system which we have embraced is, in our judgment, more true, and more useful, than the systems which prevail around us."

Before entering on an examination of these general reasons, it is natural to inquire, and indeed necessary to determine, what the Unitarian system is: for unless we know what the system is, how can we estimate the force of reasons to induce us to embrace it? But to this most reasonable in-

quiry, we are furnished with no explicit answer; and we are under the necessity of proceeding to the body of the work, and of spelling out what Unitarianism is, from among the reasons advanced to support it. In doing this, we are impressed more than ever with the propriety of a description once given of Unitarianism, that it "consists rather in not believing;"\* since, having diligently examined the pages before us, with a view to discover what it is, we can now tell of little more than what it is not—than what it rejects and discards from the religious system of our venerated Fathers. It rejects, first of all, the doctrine of the Trinity, inculcating, not only (in common with other systems) the unity of God, but that there are no personal distinctions in the Godhead. It rejects the divinity of the Saviour, receiving him merely in his official character, without pretending to know how long he has lived, or what may be his particular rank in the scale of created beings. "From the stones, God could raise up children to Abra-

\* This description was given by a Unitarian of Boston.

ham; and from the dust, he could raise up a Saviour. Suppose that his existence did commence with his birth; he might be none the less invested with all needful power." (p. 18.) Unitarianism farther rejects the proper atonement of Christ; regarding his death "as an example of virtue," or, if we please, "a sacrifice in the cause of virtue." It rejects also the scriptural view of human depravity; "believing that this depravity is great and lamentable, but not that it is native or total." It rejects the kindred doctrine of a radical and instantaneous moral change; preferring to consider conversion a progressive work, varying in its nature and character according to the varying circumstances of those who are its subjects.\*

Such then is Unitarianism; and now for the reasons why the abettors of this system receive it, in preference to all others. "Our first and great reason," says Mr. D., "is, that in our apprehension it is *truer* than any other system." But what are we to understand by this singular mode of expression? "*Truer* than any other system!" Some other system then may be true; but Unitarianism is truer; and a third, yet undiscovered perhaps, may be the truest; and still not even this may be the truth! But not to appear captious;—how does Mr. D. evince that his is the truer system?—He begins with the Unitarian view of the Divine Being, and

\* "With regard to *divine influence*," says Mr. D., "we firmly believe in it; only we maintain that it is strictly accommodated to the human powers, to human agency and freedom. And *election* we do not object against, if men are elected to be Christians, just as they are elected to be merchants or philosophers—in perfect conformity with their own choice, endeavour, and moral action. And *perseverance* we do not oppose, but plead for, if the doctrine be, that he only is a good man who is perseveringly good." pp. 35, 36.

asserts that this is, first, "the simple doctrine of the Bible;" second, "the unembarrassed doctrine of the Bible;" and third, "the current doctrine of the Bible." But what does he mean by its being "the simple doctrine of the Bible?" That the idea of one God existing in one person is more simple than that commonly received by Trinitarians? And what if it is? Is it on this account the more true? Do the Scriptures exhibit the Divine Being as a specially simple object of thought, presenting nothing mysterious, nothing difficult, to the contemplative mind? Certainly not, but the contrary. "*Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?*"—If the proper meaning of Mr. Dewey's first proposition has here been given, it obviously proves nothing to his purpose; and we can conceive of no other meaning, without running it into the second, viz. that his is "the unembarrassed doctrine of the Bible."—But is it possible that he finds no embarrassment, in squaring his views of the Supreme Being, with those presented in the holy Scriptures? Has he no embarrassment from those passages which speak of a plurality of persons in the Godhead? "Let us make man after our own image." "Let us go down, and confound their language." Has he none from the mass of evidence, so often exhibited, in proof of the supreme divinity of the Son, and Spirit? When the Son is called, not only God and Lord, but "the mighty God," the "true God," the "God over all," the "Jehovah of Israel"—when all the attributes of the Deity are appropriated to

him, and all the works of the Deity are ascribed to him, and all the honors of the Deity are offered to him—still, does Mr. D. find no embarrassment in saying and showing, that there is but one person in the Godhead, and that this person is the Father? Does he find no embarrassment from those many passages, in which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are spoken of together, as distinctively concerned in the work of our redemption? “Baptizing them in name of the *Father*, and of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*.” “Elect, according to the foreknowledge of *God the Father*, through sanctification of the *Spirit*, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of *Christ*.” “The grace of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, and the love of *God*, and the communion of the *Holy Ghost*, be with you all.” “Through *him* (*Christ*) we both have access, by one *Spirit*, unto the *Father*.”\* Remarking upon one of the passages commonly urged in proof of the divinity of Christ,† Mr. D. observes, “To some other translation we are urged, or else to the entire suspension of our judgment, by the monstrous incongruities and contradictions of the popular explanation.” (p. 11.) That is, ‘Another translation must be forced upon this passage, or we cannot tell what it means—we cannot explain it, consistently with Unitarian sentiments.’ And yet Mr. D. would persuade us that he finds no embarrassment, in rejecting the divinity of the Son of God!

But he proceeds to urge, that his is “the current doctrine of Scripture;” and in proof of this,

\* Matt. xxviii. 19. 1 Peter, i. 2. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Eph. ii. 18.

† Rom. ix. 5. “*Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever.*”

he tells us in how many hundred passages the supreme divinity of the Father is set forth; and in how many hundred more the Son is represented as “subordinate to the Father.” (p. 14.) But does he really believe that Trinitarians deny the supreme divinity of the Father; or that they do not regard the Son as in some sense subordinate, and even inferior to the Father? If his hundreds of passages, on these subjects, were increased to thousands, they would prove nothing to his purpose—nothing which we do not believe, as firmly as himself. It is perfectly vain for Unitarians to think of pressing us with proof-texts such as these; since they bear not at all on the question between us, but go merely to establish some of the essential parts of our own religious system.

In contradiction to the assertions of Mr. D., we feel it incumbent on us to say, that the Trinitarian doctrine is the only one which meets all the representations of the inspired volume, particularly in regard to the *person of Christ*. It meets those in which he is represented as God, and in which he is represented as man, and in which he is represented as the Mediator between God and man. It meets those in which he is represented as equal with the Father, and in which he is represented as inferior to him. It meets those in which he is represented as one with the Father, and in which he is represented as distinct from him.

The various representations of Scripture respecting the person of Christ, it is thought may be compared to a lock, the wards of which are so constructed, that but one key can possibly be made to fit them. Apply the sentiment that Christ is God, and nothing

else, and the key will not suit. It will turn indeed a little way, but cannot be forced round. It meets those passages which speak of the Saviour's divinity, but is irreconcilable with others which speak of his humanity.—Apply next the doctrine of Christ's mere humanity, and this does not suit. This will turn very well a little way, but no strength or artifice can bring it round. This meets those passages which speak of the Saviour's humanity, but is inconsistent with others which speak of his divinity.—Apply next the various keys of the other, and (as they are sometimes thought) higher classes of Unitarians, and none of these will suit. They may indeed be driven thro' some particular parts of the lock, but they turn easily nowhere, and it is impossible, without breaking, to force them through the whole. The only key which is known, or can be conceived of, which will perfectly suit in every part, is the sentiment advanced by Trinitarians, that *Christ unites, in his person, both divinity and humanity.* With this idea, all the passages which speak of him are consistent. In this, they all perfectly harmonize; and thus evince that this is indeed the revelation which God hath given us of his Son.

Mr. D. objects to the Trinitarian system, that, on this ground, Christ must have *humbled himself* to undertake the mediatorial work; whereas the Scriptures speak of him, in his appointment to this work, as being greatly *honored and exalted.* "Him hath God *exalted* to be a Prince and a Saviour." "God hath highly *exalted* him, and given him a name that is above every name."—But Mr. D. ought to know there is another class of passages, which assert that Christ actually *did*

*humble himself*, when he assumed the office of Mediator. "Though he was rich, yet, for your sakes, he *became poor.*" "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but *made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men*; and, being found in fashion as a man, he *humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*"—It is the happiness of our system, that it meets and harmonizes both these classes of passages; while it is the misfortune of the Unitarian system, that it meets, at best, but one of them. As *man*, Christ was "highly exalted," in being made "a Prince and a Saviour;" but as *God*, he greatly humbled himself, when he "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men," and entered upon his mediatorial work. It is characteristic of the Trinitarian system, and of this only, that it is in agreement with all the representations which are given of Christ, in the inspired volume.

From the doctrine of the Trinity, Mr. D. passes to that of the *atonement.* He resolves the death of Christ into a mere *mean of grace*, intended to promote our deliverance from sinful practices, and to furnish motives in favor of holiness. Christ died, he says, first, "as an example of virtue;" second, "that he might rise again, and thus confirm the truth of his mission;" and third, as "a sacrifice in the cause of human virtue," and to furnish "a strong and affecting pledge of God's mercy" to men. (pp. 27—30.) That some of the objects here mentioned were accomplished by the death of Christ, no one doubts; but the question is, does



either of them, or do they all, constitute the *great* purpose and object for which he died? He exhibited an *example* of patient and submissive suffering, we admit; but can it be conceived that he endured the agonies of the cross, for this purpose merely? Did any one else ever die for such an object? Thousands have met their last enemy with exemplary patience, submission, and fortitude; but whoever died for the mere purpose of setting such an example? The *resurrection* of Christ was consequent upon his death; but so also it was upon his life and birth. And it may be said as truly, that he could not have risen, had he not been born and lived, as that he could not have risen had he not died. But Christ died, we are told, "as a *sacrifice* in the cause of human virtue." This form of expression has been adopted, we presume, for the purpose of *lugging* in the word *sacrifice*, which is so often used, in the Scriptures, in reference to the death of Christ. But the word, as here used, has nothing of its appropriate scriptural signification. Christ died a "sacrifice in the cause of human virtue,"—just as Warren died a sacrifice in the cause of American freedom; or as Martyn died a sacrifice in the cause of Missions.—Christ's death, we are farther told, "is a strong and affecting pledge of God's mercy to men." But could God in no way satisfy men that he was merciful, but by such a tremendous token as the blood of his Son? Would they not believe his *word* on this point—a point to which, of all others, they might be supposed to be, and in fact have been, most inclined to give credence? Would they persist in regarding him as unfeeling, unmerciful, unless he brought his

Son to the cross, to satisfy them of the contrary?

Mr. D., in common with other Unitarians, regards an atonement through the blood of Christ as wholly unnecessary; since "forgiveness is the direct and unavoidable consequence of repentance and holiness." (p. 25.) But if forgiveness, or justification (which means the same) is "the direct and unavoidable consequence of repentance and holiness," then, in what sense are men not justified by their own performances? And what is the ground of the distinction, so much insisted on by the Apostle Paul, between being justified by faith, and by works? And farther; if "forgiveness is the direct and unavoidable consequence of repentance and holiness," then why, in the matter of forgiveness, is so much stress laid upon the *blood*, and the *death* of Christ? "This is my *blood* of the New Testament, which is shed for many *for the remission of sins*." "We have redemption through his *blood*, the *forgiveness of sins*." "Unto him who hath loved us, and *washed us from our sins in his own blood*."\*

Regarding the atonement as unnecessary, Mr. D. denies, as we might expect, that any atonement has ever been made. He denies that the sufferings of Christ are represented anywhere in the Scriptures, as "rendering it consistent with the divine character or government to forgive sinners." (p. 25.) But what will he make of the following representation of the Apostle Paul? "Whom (Christ) God hath set forth to be a *propitiation*," or *propitiatory sacrifice*, "through faith in his blood." For what purpose? "To declare his *righteousness, for the remission of sins*

\* Mat. xxvi. 28. Eph. i. 7. Rev. v. 9.



that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time *his righteousness*." But why must his righteousness be declared? "*That he might be just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.*" And what will he make of the declaration, that "*without the shedding of blood, there is no remission?*" There was none under the former shadowy dispensation; and there is none under the present, in which the substance has come, and the shadows are no more. And do not all those passages, which represent us as forgiven *through Christ*, and *for his sake*, necessarily imply that we could consistently be forgiven in no other way? Would Christ have died to open a way of forgiveness, when there was no necessity for such a sacrifice?

The next subject, on which Mr. D. regards his system as "truer" than that of the Orthodox, is *human depravity*. He seems to be aware that the Bible, literally interpreted, inculcates the total sinfulness of unsanctified men. But he adds, "The expressions which are quoted" in proof of this point, "are evidently the language, not of philosophical discrimination, but of strong feeling." (p. 33.) Consequently, as we are left to infer, they are not worthy to be believed.

The argument on which he chiefly relies, in opposing the doctrine of total depravity, is that "from reason, from experience, and observation." And to what does this amount? Why, in the first place, that "the *native principles* in man, such as the desire of physical enjoyment, of happiness, of power, of esteem, of knowledge—that the principle of self-defence—with the faculties of reason, conscience, mem-

ory," &c. are not sinful. (p. 32.) And nobody ever supposed they were. These native principles and faculties are possessed by the worst men, as well as by the best—they belong to our constitutions, and not to our characters—and no believer in total depravity, who understood the subject, ever regarded them as, of necessity, either sinful or holy.—But Mr. D. insists farther, that "good and holy *affections* are natural to men." And how does this appear? In general, from the fact, that we have something within us, which approves of what is right, and is affected with what is particularly generous, in the conduct of men. But is the approbation here spoken of, that of the conscience, or the heart; and are the affections referred to a part of the moral character, or the mere workings of animal feeling? In determining this point, it is not safe to appeal, as Mr. D. does, to the *consciousness* of individuals, but rather to the *fruit* which is exhibited in their conversation and lives. And having this for a criterion, we assert, without fear of contradiction, that the marks of holy affection suggested by Mr. D. appear not unfrequently in palpably vicious men—in men, who make no effectual efforts to *be* what they approve, or to imitate those acts of humanity and generosity, with which they are so much affected;—thus evincing that these are no marks of true holiness, and are not at all inconsistent with the divine declaration, that "the hearts of the sons of men are *full of evil*."

With the views which Mr. D. has expressed on the subject of depravity, his ideas of *conversion* cannot but be, in our apprehension, unscriptural. He talks in-

deed about conversion, but it amounts to but little more than talk. For if "good and holy affections are natural to men," *from what shall they be converted?* And *to what shall they be converted?* If their holy, natural affections are inconstant and imperfect, they may indeed be improved and perfected; but they cannot be, in the scriptural sense, *converted*—they cannot experience a radical and permanent moral change. Accordingly Mr. D. denies that *all* Christians ever do experience such a change; and that any are converted from total sinfulness to the first exercise of holiness. And yet how expressly is such a change inculcated and insisted on, in the holy Scriptures? "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."\*

Mr. D. resolves his reasons for regarding Unitarianism as the more *useful* system of religion, into a series of "objections to the popular or Orthodox instructions of the day." These objections are ranged under three heads; first, "a want of discrimination;" second, "a want of enlarged and liberal views;" and third, "a want of real and close dealing with the conscience." (p. 37.)

The "want of discrimination," with which Orthodox ministers are considered chargeable, consists, it appears, in their adhering too strictly, to "the language of the Apostles," and in applying their language "too indiscriminately." "The terms *believing, being born again, being brought out of darkness into marvellous light*"—the regarding enlightened

congregations as composed of "two classes, *believers* and *unbelievers, penitent* and *impenitent, saints* and *sinner*s"—and the Apostolic exhortation, "*Be not conformed to the world*"—although they might have been very well in the time of the Apostles—yet, in the opinion of Mr. D., ought now to be discarded. But on this subject, we trust he may set his heart at rest. The ground of his complaint against Orthodox ministers, is one on which they feel entitled to glory. They love the language of the Apostles, and will strenuously adhere to it; because, in the first place, it is the language of *inspiration*—the language suggested by the Holy Ghost; and because it expresses, with admirable precision, the *sense* which they intend to convey. We do verily believe that enlightened congregations, at the present day, like those in the age of the Apostles, are divided into two great moral classes, believers and unbelievers, saints and sinners—that when any sinner becomes a saint, he is, in the sense of Scripture, "*born again,*" and "*brought out of darkness into marvellous light*"—and that those who are thus changed have need to be exhorted not to be "*conformed to the world;*" and believing this, why should we not speak of it in the language of Scripture? What better language can we think to devise, than that which was taught, not by the wisdom of man, but by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost?

In his complaint on the subject of conformity to the world, Mr. D. has some sentences which we feel constrained to quote, as a specimen of the spirit which occasionally oozes out, through

\* John iii. 3. Mat. xviii. 3.

the leaky vessel of a boasted charity.

"One of the first notions which a new convert acquires, is, that men around him, perhaps his best friends, his kindred, are enemies or despisers of him on account of his religion, and he becomes, in consequence, sour, or sanctimonious, or conceited, and at any rate, less kind, less agreeable, less modest; while he imagines that he is all the more pious and heavenly. At the same time he is taught to avoid all cheerful recreations, as the ways of the sinful world; at least all polished recreations. He may go to the military review, he may celebrate 'the Election,' or the festival of Independence; he may mingle with promiscuous crowds, amidst vulgar sports, vicious excesses, and profane oaths, and not lose his good name; but let him beware of more decent and polished amusements, as he values his Christian standing. We do not deny that recreation may be abused, as business and every thing else may be abused. Still, however, the one was designed to occupy a place in life, as much as the other. Our concern is not to extirpate but to improve the pleasures of society. And to refuse recreations to the young, and relaxation to the busy, and amusement to the toiling, is not only an unwise and an unpromising undertaking, but it is to distort the rational and cheerful religion we profess, to disparage it in the eyes of intelligent and thinking men, and to dissuade them from its duties and ordinances. And it is at the same time to hold up to Christians, a very loose and questionable standard of piety." pp. 40, 41.

A considerable part of this paragraph we declare to be utterly false and scandalous. New converts among the Orthodox are not taught to regard their "best friends, their kindred, as enemies and despisers of them, on account of their religion"—although the treatment which they sometimes receive from their former friends is of a character to rivet this impression upon them. Nor are they taught that "they may mingle with promiscuous crowds, amidst vulgar sports, vicious excesses, and profane oaths, and not lose their good name." And we can frame no excuse for a

man, who has had as many opportunities as Mr. Dewey, for becoming acquainted with respectable Orthodox clergymen, who can allow himself in making such injurious assertions. The offence which has provoked them, we can indeed divine. Our ministers do not copy the example which is set them by some of the Unitarian clergy, in attending balls, and theatres, and parties of sinful pleasure; nor do they countenance an attendance upon such places, in the members of their churches. Others may, if they please, regard these amusements as "cheerful and polished recreations;" and regard those who discourage them as "distorting the rational and cheerful religion we profess." But we have not so learned Christ. And Orthodox ministers and Christians we hope will not cease to bear their testimony against all those scenes of levity and sin, which, while they gratify the dissipated and thoughtless, and nurture "the pride of life," are calculated to banish seriousness, unfit for devotion, and disgust and starve the spiritual mind.

Orthodox ministers are farther charged with "a want of enlarged and liberal views." The only instance of this mentioned, is their "setting the interests of the present world in opposition to those of the world to come," and representing a life of religion as a painful but needful *penance*, to be performed for the salvation of the soul.—But Mr. D., notwithstanding his Orthodox education, is entirely mistaken on this subject. This, we aver, is not the ground, on which Orthodox ministers urge and enforce the duties of religion. Our Saviour did indeed say, "Whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh

not *all* that he hath, cannot be my disciple." But what is the meaning? Not that those, who profess themselves the disciples of Christ, should literally and at once forsake all that they have; but that they hold all in subordination to their love of Christ, and be ready to forsake it, when he, in his providence, shall call. And Dr. Watts says, in the truly devotional lines which Mr. D. has quoted,

"I give my mortal interest up,  
And make my God my all."

But what is the meaning? Not that Dr. Watts, or any other disciple, does literally and at once renounce all temporal interests and enjoyments; but that he seeks and finds his chief happiness, not in these, but in God, and is ready to renounce all, at the bidding of his Divine Master. On the subject before us, we believe, and we inculcate, the sentiment of the inspired writers, that "the ways of wisdom are ways of *pleasantness*, and all her paths are *peace*"—that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the *life that now is*, and of that which is to come"—and that "*in keeping the divine commandments there is great reward.*" We quote with full credence, and with entire approbation, the expressive lines of our Orthodox brother Doddridge,

"Live while you live, the epicure would say,  
And seize the pleasures of the passing day.  
Live while you live, the tatter'd monk replies,  
And wait your happiness in yonder skies.  
In me, dear Saviour, both united be;  
*I live in pleasure, while I live to thee.*"\*

The last objection of Mr. D. to the ministrations of the Orthodox is, that they are not characterised by "real and close dealing with the *conscience*." A very singular

objection, truly, to come from a Unitarian! The very same which thousands and millions among the Orthodox would make, to preaching on the other side! "It does not arouse the slumbering conscience. It does not excite and affect the heart."—If then each side accuses the other of a want of thorough and faithful dealing with the conscience, how shall the point at issue be decided? By what criterion shall it be determined, which of the two is most in fault? We know of no safer method than an appeal to facts. Under what preaching is the slumbering conscience most frequently awakened? Under what preaching is the stupid soul most frequently disquieted and alarmed? Under what preaching are there the most frequent and noticeable reformations, and the deepest apparent convictions of sin? We have no fear as to the result of an appeal like this. The instances of distress for sin, and consequent reformation, if they occur at all among Unitarians, are certainly "few and far between;" while they are of continual occurrence, under the ministrations of the Orthodox.—The celebrated Dr. Chalmers may be regarded as an unexceptionable witness on this point. For twelve long years, he preached much after the manner of our Unitarians, inculcating their doctrines, and enforcing moral duties, with earnestness and eloquence; but in all this time, he declares that "he never once heard of any reformations having been effected among his people."\* And it was not till he changed his style of preaching, with his sentiments, and became a determined defender of the Orthodox faith, that he was per-

\* We quote from memory, and not perhaps with verbal accuracy.

\* See Chalmers's Farewell Discourse to his Parishioners of Kilmany.



mitted to witness any desirable fruit of his labors.—On the question of close and faithful dealing with the conscience, we may safely appeal to the whole Unitarian community. Have they ever known persons to leave their parishes, and unite with the Orthodox, on the ground that their preaching was too close and impressive, and gave them too much uneasiness in their courses of sin? Can they point us to a single instance of this kind? But hundreds have left Orthodox parishes and joined the Unitarians, on this very ground. They could not gratify their appetites and passions, and live in pleasure as they wished, and hear the solemn, searching truths, which every returning Sabbath brought to their ears.

The Tract here reviewed is, on the whole, an able production of its kind. The style is unequal—in some places loose and careless, but in others flowing and even eloquent. The method too is not simple or clear. Still, the book is fitted to have an influence; and its whole influence, we regret to say, will be in opposition to the truth.—What a solemn responsibility those are taking upon themselves, and what a fearful account they must expect to render, who, being blessed with talents, and with the means of exerting an extended influence, are exerting all their talents, and all their influence, to subvert the doctrine of the Apostles; to spread another Gospel; and to shut out their fellow men from a spiritual acquaintance with Him, “whom to know aright is life eternal!”

We are next to consider, “A Discourse on the Evidences of Revealed Religion; by William

E. Channing, D. D.”—the only Tract perhaps in the series, which may not properly be termed *sectarian*. A leading object of the discourse is to meet and refute the great objection to the Christian revelation, “that *miracles are incredible* ;” and that the supernatural character of an alleged fact is proof enough of its falsehood.” In disposing of this objection, which we are happy to say Dr. C. has done, in a very able and satisfactory manner, he encounters, as might have been expected, the celebrated argument of Mr. Hume, in opposition to miracles. This had been previously answered by Dr. Campbell; but several considerations are here subjoined, which serve to render that answer more convincing and complete. Indeed, this argument of Hume, of which so much was once boasted, is now seen to be no better than a specious sophism—a lamentable instance of the power of prejudice, in blinding and deceiving an ingenious and inquisitive mind.—It is well observed by Dr. C., while on the subject of miracles, that “Christianity is not only confirmed by them, but is in itself, in its very essence, a *miraculous religion*.” It is, what “it professes to be, a *supernatural communication from God*.”

Having removed the objection against miracles, Dr. C. “proceeds to consider the *evidences of the Christian religion* ;” or rather, he states and illustrates the *general principle*, into which all the evidences of Christianity may be resolved. It is merely this, that “*every effect must have an adequate cause*.” The Christian religion he considers an *effect*, for which, in many points of view, no adequate cause can be assigned, except the

special interposition of the Almighty. This part of the subject, like the other, is very ably discussed, and Christianity is shown to be, "not of earthly origin, but a ray from the everlasting light; a stream from the fountain of heavenly wisdom and love."

The truth of our religion being thus established, Dr. C. concludes, in the following eloquent and impressive manner :

"This religion, if true, is the greatest of all truths, deserving and demanding our reverent attention, and fervent gratitude. This religion must never be confounded with our common blessings. It is a revelation of pardon, which, as sinners, we all need. Still more, it is a revelation of human immortality; a doctrine which, however undervalued amidst the bright anticipations of inexperienced youth,\* is found to be our strength and consolation, and the only effectual spring of persevering and victorious virtue, when the realities of life have scattered our visionary hopes; when pain, disappointment, and temptation press upon us; when this world's enjoyments are found unable to quench that deep thirst of happiness which burns in every breast; when friends, whom we love as our own souls, die; and our own graves open before us.—To all who hear me, and especially to my young hearers, I would say, let the truth of this religion be the strongest conviction of your understandings; let its motives and precepts sway, with an absolute power, your characters and lives."

We regard this discourse with unqualified approbation, and should rejoice to see it in the hands of all our readers. The subject is most important, and it is treated in a manner to instruct and interest the different classes of society. Our single regret is, that one who has so well defended Christianity in the general, should be left to pervert and distort it, as we think Dr. C. has done, in some of his recent publications. But on these we forbear, at present, to remark. We thank

\* This discourse was delivered before the University in Cambridge, at the Dudleian Lecture, March 14, 1821.

him for the discourse here noticed; and we thank the committee of the American Unitarian Association, for giving it to the public in a cheap form. If they will publish no worse Tracts than this, the task of reviewing them will be much more pleasant than it has hitherto been, and than, we fear, it is likely to be, in the time to come.

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*The Assistant to Family Religion, in Six Parts: containing a Sermon on Family Religion; A System of Natural and Revealed Religion, in the form of Question and Answer, accompanied with Scripture Proofs, in Thirty Two Chapters; A Series of Resolutions, and Questions of Self Examination; Morning and Evening Prayers for every Day for Two Weeks, together with Occasional Prayers; Select Psalms and Hymns, adapted to Family Devotion; and Select Harmony, or Psalm Tunes, suitable for Family Worship. By WILLIAM COGSWELL, A. M. Pastor of the South Church in Dedham.—Boston: Crocker & Brewster.*

In this notice, our intention is not a critical review, but a presentation to our readers of the design and substance of the volume before us. Heads of families occupy an important station, and are under great responsibilities. On the faithful and proper discharge of their duties, more than the temporal welfare of their children and households depends, it subserves the prosperity of the churches, and the cause of religion in the world. Ministers have books, not only to remind them of their duties, but to aid in the discharge of them. This may be affirmed of almost all other per-

sons in the various offices which they sustain. We see not why parents and heads of families should not be assisted and furnished with all needful aid and encouragement. They should, as it appears to us, avail themselves of the best information and means which they can obtain, to assist them in the performance of those important duties that daily devolve upon them. The subject of their wants has not been entirely overlooked and disregarded by those who were able to supply them. Forms of prayer, and hymns for family devotion, have been composed, and catechisms have been put into the hands both of parents and of children; but these have been in *seperate* publications, and of course, more expensive and inconvenient. Few families only would be, it is probable, in possession of the whole of them. There was evidently need of a work that should comprise the whole subject of family religion and in a convenient form. Such a work is now before the public. The title page, which we have already given, shows that the *parts* are entire, wanting nothing. These parts are proportionate and sufficiently ample, and are executed with ability and judgment. We shall, separately but briefly, notice each of them, and in the order in which the author has arranged them.

The Sermon on family religion is well planned and executed, and is a proper introduction to the other parts of the work. We shall have but little room for extracts; but we are disposed, here, to make one from the conclusion of the discourse. After presenting the arguments in favor of family religion, and pointing out the time for its observance and the duties included in it, and after

considering the manner in which it should be observed, and noticing and answering excuses which are made for the neglect of the duty, the author closes by saying,

"Let me appeal directly to those of you, who are heads of families. How do you feel, and how will you act in consideration of the vastly important object of Family Religion? Will you not suffer your houses to be temples of the living God, and, from the family altar, grateful incense to ascend to heaven, morning and evening? Will you not commence and close the day with the most excellent, and noble, and pleasurable, and heavenly services of family worship? Or will you expose yourselves to the alarming denunciation, and everlasting displeasure of the Most High? O! be entreated by the authority of the great God, by the comfort and salvation of your own souls, and of those committed to your care, and by the best interests of religion, to adopt the pious resolution of Joshua, 'As for me and my house we will serve the Lord.' Morning and evening, read the Word of God, instruct your households in the great principles of Christianity, and offer unto your Father in Heaven prayer and praise. In this entreaty, I plead for the happiness of the present and future generations;—I plead for the prosperity of Zion and the world. Let these weighty motives constrain you to discharge this delightful, this profitable, this imperious duty. Happy, thrice happy the family! where God's Word is read, where suitable instructions are given, and where prayer and praise are wont to be offered. God loveth, and will bless the dwellings of Jacob."

The second, and much the largest and most difficult part of the work, is upon the subject of natural and revealed religion. It indicates much thinking, and careful investigation, and a pervading, stirring mind, conversant with theological studies. Rarely do we find so much and such various religious instruction as is here contained in about two hundred pages. Every head of a family, disposed to teach those under his care the first principles of the oracles of God, will here find that assistance which he may need. As some evidence of the

truth of this assertion, we give the general topics of which the author treats.

"1. The existence and character of God, and the condition and duties of man, as manifested by the light of nature; 2. The Sacred Scriptures; 3. The character of God, natural and moral, as revealed in the Sacred Scriptures; 4. Trinity; 5. Purposes of God; 6. Creation; 7. Providence; 8. Angels; 9. Creation and primitive state of man; 10. Rule of obedience and life to man in his primitive state; 11. Apostacy, depravity, and lost state of man; 12. Atonement; 13. Regeneration; 14. Holy Love; 15. Repentance; 16. Faith; 17. Justification; 18. Perseverance; 19. Death; 20. Future State; 21. Resurrection; 22. Judgment; 23. Future Happiness; 24. Future Misery; 25. Means of Grace; 26. Worship; 27. Sabbath; 28. Church; 29. Baptism; 30. Lord's Supper; 31. Church Government and Discipline; 32. Millennium."

These several topics are all discussed by way of question and answer. Had we room to present the questions, which are no less than four hundred and seventy one, to our readers, they would be more convinced of the value and importance of the work which we wish to recommend to their notice. The mode which the Author has adopted, that of question and answer, is certainly the best adapted to the purpose of instruction, and admits of the most matter within the same compass. Heads of families will find the principal truths and duties of religion, collected, assorted and arranged for their use. The part of the work, now under our eye, is rendered more valuable, by the illustrations and proofs adduced from Scripture, and placed at the bottom of each page. A mere reference to chapter and verse would have been of service; but a much greater service is done by quoting the passages, and presenting them immediately to the eye of the reader. They

may now be read in connexion with the doctrine, or duty, which they are brought to support. This is, obviously, a great convenience. We have examined many of the passages, with a view to satisfy ourselves whether they are pertinently introduced. The result is a conviction, that they are well selected, and either directly, or indirectly show, what they are adduced to show. They may, very generally, be relied on as proof texts. We are not prepared to affirm, that no sentiment advanced by the Author will be called in question by any of the religious community; but we do believe, that the main doctrines exhibited are according to godliness, and contained in the Scriptures of truth. In the part we are now reviewing, scarcely any thing is loosely and vaguely written. The writer has a meaning, and he definitely and clearly expresses what he means. The volume before us, and, especially, that part of it now under consideration, will be found highly useful to preachers, to instructors of Sabbath schools, and a proper book for the higher classes in such schools. The aid it will afford to those whom we have mentioned, will be found in the great variety of important and appropriate subjects of which it treats, in the selection of passages from the Scriptures, and in the observations which are made and the reasons which are offered as illustrations and proofs.

After making two or three extracts, we shall close what we propose to present on this division of the work. The first is taken from the Chapter on the Sacred Scriptures. The question is,

"What is the evidence, that the Bible is given by inspiration of God?"



The answer is,

"There is evidence from history;—from miracles recorded in it, wrought in the presence of competent witnesses;—from its prophecies and their fulfilment;—from the unrivalled sublimity of its language, the nature and harmony of its doctrines, and the perfect purity of its precepts;—from the glorious effects it has produced upon the hearts and lives of multitudes;—from the sacred character of its Writers;—from the propagation of Christianity;—and from the analogy there is between natural and revealed religion."

We quote the fifteenth question in the same Chapter together with the answer, because we wish the sentiment may not be forgotten by our readers.

"Are all controversies in religion, decrees of councils, opinions of ancient and modern writers, and the doctrines of private men, to be tested by the Bible?"

"A. They are. This is the supreme judge in all matters of religion. There can be no appeal from Scripture to reason, for this would be to exalt man above God. This grand Protestant maxim should ever be embraced and maintained."

Our next extracts are from the fourth Chapter, on the Trinity. To the question,

"Do the Scriptures teach the Doctrine of three persons in the one essence in the Godhead?"

The answer is,

"They teach, that there is one God, numerically one in essence and attributes, and that, in this one God, there is a three-fold subsistence or distinction, or three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, possessing numerically the same essence, and the same perfections, so far as made known to us. This mode of existence is peculiar to the Great Jehovah. In the one self-existent Being, there is a something, as the ground for His existing Trinity in Unity."

We have room but for one more extract from the same Chapter.

"Q. Is God one and three in the same sense?"

"A. He is not. God is three in Person, but one in essence or substance;—three

in one respect, but one in another. The three Persons in the Godhead do not make one Person; neither does the one God make three Gods; but the three Persons exist in one God, and the one God subsists in three Persons. God is *really*, and not *nominally*, three in Person; but not in any such sense as to be inconsistent with His being one in essence."

After a careful perusal of the twelfth chapter, which is on the Atonement, we see not that any extracts can be made that will give our readers a fair view of what the Author has written upon this prominent and important subject of the New Testament. The whole chapter should be read in connexion. In the close of it we find a sentiment, that demands the serious consideration of all at the present day.

"Q. Is the doctrine of atonement taught by revelation only, or is it a dictate of reason, or the light of nature?"

"A. Reason and the light of nature can give no information on this subject. The doctrine of atonement is derived wholly from the sacred Scriptures. And it is this which peculiarly distinguishes the Christian religion from Deism, Mahometanism, Paganism, and all other religions. All, therefore, who reject the atonement ought not to be considered as believers in the religion of Christ."

We feel that it is time to repress our inclination for making extracts. After making one more on Future Misery, we resolve to desist.

"Q. What are the evidences, that there is a future state of misery for the finally impenitent of mankind?"

"A. 1. The plain and explicit declarations of the Scriptures in relation to this subject, are decisive evidence of the truth of this doctrine. 2. The opposition, made to the instructions of the Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles by the impenitent, to whom they preached, is evidence, that they did teach this doctrine. Their hearers would never have been so bitter to the truths they taught, if they had declared, that all men would be saved. 3. The concern in many for their own future salvation, produced by the preaching of the Gospel, by Christ

and His Apostles, is an evidence, that the doctrine of future punishment was taught by them. 4. The great solicitude for the salvation of souls, which the Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles manifested, proves beyond a doubt, that they believed in the doctrine of the future misery of the wicked, and that they taught it."

Passing to the third part, we find eighty resolutions, with questions for examination annexed to each of them. We feel as if no one, and especially as if no one having a concern for his own personal religion and spiritual state, can peruse them without profit. As a specimen of this part of the work, we copy the 34th and 79th resolutions, with the questions for examination.

"*Resolution.* I will consider my corporeal and mental faculties, my time, earthly possessions and influence, as the property of God, loaned to me, and I will use them as not abusing them."

"*Question.* Must I not condemn myself for the habitual violation of this resolution? Have not my idols been many? And have I not exulted in my powers and possessions?"

"*R.* I will view with pleasure the many benevolent Societies, which have been formed to promote the temporal and spiritual good of mankind, and will give them my approbation, my prayers, and my pecuniary assistance, so far as I have ability and opportunity."

"*Q.* Have I done so the year past? If the relief of human sufferings, and the spread of the Gospel depend on me and others like me, will not the poor continue to suffer, and sinners continue to die in ignorance and sin?"

The resolutions, throughout, are such as every one ought to make and to keep, and the questions upon them are fitted to bring out the state of the heart,

and to lead all who attend to them to see of what manner of spirit they are.

In the fourth part, the Author has composed, for the assistance of those who need them, forms of prayers for a family, morning and evening, and for several occasions, and in a well judged variety. They are original, pertinent, comprehensive, and devotional. Although many passages of Scripture are wrought into them, yet we in no instance found the same passage occurring in different prayers.

For the Psalms and Hymns, which are about sixty in number, the Author is entitled to the praise of making a judicious selection from a variety of the best poetical works. We hope that many will be encouraged and disposed to commence and maintain singing as a part of their family worship.

The Psalm Tunes, with which the volume before us closes, are of all the variety of metres in common use in public worship. Of these, we need say nothing more than this, that they are approved by the best judges of sacred music.

The Author, it appears to us, has ably executed his design, and done an important service to the religious community, by preparing and publishing the volume before us. We are happy to learn the approbation and currency it has received during the short time it has been before the public. We wish it a continued and general circulation.



# Sabbath School Libraries.

**JAMES LORING**, at No. 132, Washington

street, Boston, has for sale an extensive assortment of Books, suitable for Sunday scholars and teachers, among which are the following. A liberal deduction is made from the retail prices. Additions to the variety are constantly made.

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| <p>The Young Jewess, a Narrative, exhibiting the superior moral influence of Christianity</p> <p>The Banks of the Irvine, a Scottish Tale, illustrating the happy reconciliation of a family, and the power of religious truth.</p> <p>The Twin Sisters.</p> <p>History of Susan Gray, by Mrs. Sherwood.</p> <p>Pierre and his Family.</p> <p>Monument of Parental Affection.</p> <p>Maternal Solicitude for a Daughter's best interests. By Mrs. Taylor.</p> <p>Reciprocal Duties of Parents and Children, by do.</p> <p>Practical Hints to Young Females, or the duties of a Wife, a Mother, and a Mistress of a Family. By Mrs. Taylor.</p> <p>James Somers, the Pilgrim's Son.</p> <p>Story of Jack Halyard.</p> <p>Orphans of Normandy. By Mrs. Sherwood.</p> <p>Jane and her Teacher.</p> <p>George Wilson and his Friend.</p> <p>Nott's Religious Scenes.</p> <p>Enfield's Natural Theology, with cuts.</p> <p>Christian Father's present.</p> <p>Catherine Brown, the converted Indian.</p> <p>Sunday School teacher's Guide.</p> <p>Anna Ross.</p> <p>Memoirs of Miss Sinclair.</p> <p>Choice Pleasures for Youth.</p> <p>Mother's Portrait.</p> <p>Walks of Usefulness in London.</p> <p>Watts on the Mind, with Questions.</p> <p>Sketch of My Friend's Family.</p> <p>Mrs. Rowe's Devout Exercises of the Heart.</p> <p>Russell's Seven Sermons.</p> <p>Profession is not Principle.</p> <p>The Decision, or Religion must be all or is nothing.</p> <p>● Edwards on Religious Affections, abridged by Ellerby.</p> <p>Mather's Essays to do Good.</p> <p>Cecil's Remains.</p> <p>Picturesque Piety. By Isaac Taylor.</p> <p>Female Sunday School Teacher.</p> <p>Italian Convert, a Narrative.</p> <p>Recaptured Negro. By Mrs. Sherwood.</p> <p>Lily Douglas.</p> <p>The Catechist.</p> <p>Jane Taylor's Memoirs.</p> <p>Ayah and Lady. By Mrs. Sherwood.</p> <p>Harriet Newell.</p> <p>History of George Desmond.</p> <p>Durant's Memoirs of an Only Son.</p> <p>Rural Rambles.</p> <p>Student's Walk, or a Sabbath in the country.</p> <p>Itinerary of a Traveller in the Wilderness. By Mrs. Taylor.</p> | <p>Infant's Progress from the valley of destruction to everlasting glory. By Mrs. Sherwood.</p> <p>Mrs. Sherwood's Stories on the Church Catechism.</p> <p>The Sister's Friend.</p> <p>Farmer's daughter, a Narrative.</p> <p>Henry Martyn's Memoirs</p> <p>Juliana Oakly. By Mrs. Sherwood.</p> <p>Bible Questions.</p> <p>Lincoln's Scripture Questions.</p> <p>Hand of Providence, a Narrative.</p> <p>Harriet and her Cousin.</p> <p>Dr. Humphrey on the Sabbath.</p> <p>Thornton on Repentance.</p> <p>Helen of the Glen.</p> <p>Little Henri, the Lost Child.</p> <p>Nina, an Icelandic Tale.</p> <p>Warning and Example to the Young.</p> <p>Young Convert's Apology.</p> <p>Lottery ticket.</p> <p>Peaceful Valley.</p> <p>Factory Girl.</p> <p>Fenelon's Reflections.</p> <p>Economy of Human Life.</p> <p>Wisdom in Miniature.</p> <p>Fenelon's Pious Reflections.</p> <p>Beautiful Vine, and other religious sketches.</p> <p>Pilkington's Scripture History.</p> <p>Patience. By Mrs. Holland.</p> <p>Hieroglyphic Bible.</p> <p>Father Clement.</p> <p>Hints on Nursery Discipline.</p> <p>Clarke on Scripture Promises.</p> <p>Hannah More's Two Shoe makers.</p> <p>Allein's Alarm to the Unconverted.</p> <p>Baxter's Call to the Unconverted.</p> <p>Kempis's Soliloquy of the Soul.</p> <p>Familiar Letters between a Mother and her Daughter at School. By Mrs. and Miss Taylor.</p> <p>Seraphical Young Sheperd, being a remarkable account of a Shepherd in France, who became a Christian without any other means than the Scriptures, and the influence of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>A Father's Gift to his Son on his becoming an Apprentice.</p> <p>Is this Religion? or a page from the book of the world.</p> <p>Brooks' Apples of Gold, for young men and women, and a Crown of Glory for old men and women.</p> <p>Interesting Sabbath School Anecdotes.</p> <p>Innocent Poetry.</p> <p>Village School, Visits to a Cottage, and other religious tales.</p> <p>Mason's Self Knowledge with Questions.</p> |
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